

**VOL. 23**

**SERIAL No. 256**

**Number**

**256**

# **The LABOUR ORGANISER**

**Edited by  
H. DRINKWATER**

**PRICE 4d. (monthly)  
post free 5d.  
5/- per annum**

**Churchill's  
"Best Men"**

**Proprietors : The National Union of Labour Organisers and Election Agents**

**ESTABLISHED 1920**

# THE RADICAL LABOUR WEEKLY

invaluable to every member of the Labour Party  
who wants reliable information on  
what's going on behind  
the scenes.

## TRIBUNE

SIX PENCE



# The Labour Organiser

PUBLISHING OFFICE: DEANSWAY, WORCESTER

Communications to be addressed to H. Drinkwater, Editor-Manager,  
Fernhill Heath, near Worcester

Vol. 23. No. 256

1943

Price 4d.

5/- per annum, post free

## Churchill's "Best Men"

We wrote last month of the shaking which recent events had dealt to a coupon election, or that even sillier suggestion of a ten years' National Unity truce after war. We expressed, we believe, the overwhelming opinion of the rank and file of the Party, which, clearer than some people much concerned, see in the present situation, and in any long-continued alliance, a denial of Social Democracy and the defeat of Labour's hopes and programme.

Now Mr. Churchill has spoken. We shall ponder his words; we shall remember them now, in the future and always; and we shall recall them at convenient times and at inconvenient times. For Mr. Churchill speaks words of portent—for that is he not famous?—and these are words of special portent—for Labour.

Speaking of his hopes to be at the helm in an after-war Government, and of his plan therefor, he said:

"It will have to be presented to the country, either by a National Government representative, as this one is, of the three Parties in the State, or by a National Government comprising the best men (sic) of all Parties who are willing to serve."

Now there is no ambiguity about that statement, even if there is a world of ambiguity about the programme and the measures such a so-called "National Government" might become responsible for. If Mr. Churchill's statement means anything it is an open threat to the Labour Party that if they carry

out the implied intention of the 1940 compact to leave the Government when the purpose for which Labour joined the Government was accomplished, the outcome will be an appeal over the head of our Party to Labour Ministers to continue in office.

We thank Mr. Churchill for speaking plainly. We are not so sure that our thanks will be re-echoed everywhere. Anyway, we can now see clearly the intention, the threat—and the trap: for the snare is set in sight of the bird. What a silly bird it might be to take no notice.

We do not think that the coming Labour Conference should be idle or silent concerning Mr. Churchill's threat. It is a challenge and a defiance, too, of a settled Labour Conference decision: a bargain openly entered into and, on Labour's part, so far, rigorously adhered to. It may be all very well for Labour to affect a magnificent indifference, but that way we may drift, or find ourselves willy-nilly tied by an alliance which is obnoxious and fundamentally destructive of the very objects and foundation of the Party. And to serve whom or what? Not Socialism!

We sympathise with Labour Ministers in the ardent wooing to which they are thus subject, though each one must wonder who are "best men." And when at Cabinet meetings they fish out, with their long spoons (we are sure they must use them), those trifling items of legislative meat with which the Labour partner must be content, how they must blush at the greed of

the 1922 Committee co-diners who grudge them even this. It is hard to be wooed by the master but grudging both a fair deal and meal.

Seriously, though, it is uncomfortable for Labour Ministers, and unfair to each, when the Prime Minister, under whom they loyally serve (and who happens also to be head of the Conservative Party) so far forgets himself and his duty of to-day to use the glamour of his position to map out a still more glamorous career for himself, while suggesting that those same colleagues would be ready to aid his enterprise by becoming traitors to their life cause. "Best men," forsooth! Let us have the names!

\* \* \*

Mr. Churchill's ill-starred speech is, however, not half so dangerous as another hare just started. And we raise our eyebrows, for this hare is started at Transport House, though we hasten to say we are certain "Transport House" has no responsibility and probably no knowledge of the matter. For this is a private hare—unofficial, non-official, not official at all. But it is the ugliest hare that ever started. And it runs as the Gospel of Defeat.

The story goes that Mr. Churchill will fight. He will, "of course," win, with Labour, if it fights him, simply nowhere. Therefore, how much wiser to be wise; to co-operate; to get a little where we might get none; to hang on to the Tory tail and get what droppings we may. And that's as far into the future as Mr. Coldfeet dares to peep. We quote:

"When the time comes, will the Labour Party choose to leave the Government and fight as a party in the hope of securing a majority against a Government headed by Churchill? I don't know, but I think the risk would be very great, and that, from every point of view, it would be better for Labour to keep some hold of peace-making and post-war reconstruction by remaining in the Government for a stipulated period after the war.

"I have no doubt that the Prime Minister's present intention is to put through most of the Beveridge proposals and a number of other progressive plans. I think he will get a majority of the Tory Party to back him. At the moment, my view is that Labour would serve the country and itself better by maintaining the present unity in the immediate post-war years.

Compromise? Yes. But the whole of life is one big compromise."

We think the complete answer to that paragraph is to be found in the following conclusion, quoted from "Forward":

"In the long run, the Labour Party would be better served in Parliament by a group of M.P.s 'accommodated in a medium-sized transport plane' if they were fearless and independent than by a couple of hundred yes-men who were prepared to sacrifice their principles to keep their seats."

\* \* \*

And now let us turn to the Press stunt of an election *this* year, of a snap election under new rules, an election that would be a vote of confidence in the Premier, a mandate to fight on and win, and a blank cheque for making the Peace and the Reconstruction.

For ourselves, we refuse to believe that Mr. Churchill intends this, though a Prime Minister's tantrums may always precipitate an election, as the "L.O." has before pointed out and protested at. We have urged that the date of the election should be fixed—and now.

Should such an election take place a delicate position would arise for Labour, and our desire here, is not to prejudice a situation, or increase its difficulties, but to call for clear, calm consideration. The Party must not be made the victim of a trick, and it must judge calmly with all the cards on the table, and all the ministers at command.

But we venture to say that with Labour for, or against, the Government the vote against the Government in a dishonest election would be of such a size as to confound all the prophets, and any scheming politicians, too. And that vote would sound the death-knell of heaps of things, and Labour might escape scalding only to be burned.

A war-time election would be at least an embarrassment to Labour, and no one knows that better than the Leader of the Tory Party. Certain questions must be faced up to, however, and no decision made or pledged beforehand.

Labour has had a miserable deal out of the present Coalition. If Labour is to join the next one it will be asked on what terms. Surely, if Labour comes out with the Coalition, and supports the Coalition, it cannot fight the Coalition at the polls. It must be content with its present representation, and



even be prepared to suffer losses in defending its seats against other comers.

Will the balance of power in the Coalition then correspond with the representation in the House? Or will the real power and purpose of the Coalition be Conservative, the minority being set the impossible task of taking the sting out of Socialist propaganda and Socialist urge, endeavour and organisation?

Altogether the problem that looms ahead is an awkward one. If one could eliminate interest and retain only Socialist faith and courage, and the spirit that would win through adversity to brighter and happier prospects, we might save ourselves and win our ideals. But shall we? Can we?

Yet the chains that bind us are of our own making. Must a Movement, whose watchword is "Liberty," become at last a slave?

All together: Never! Never!! Never!!!

\* \* \*

We feel we cannot conclude this article on a note of interrogation, of doubt, or pessimism. Neither of ambiguity, nor wonder. We cannot

foretell the future, but three things we do know that will guide us in the future, and maybe will decide the issue. They are:—

1. The Labour Party must close its ranks. The Party is really great and powerful, but in so far as it speaks with different voices, it is weak, and its differences are known to, and are the opportunity of, its enemies. The moral is, no less for leaders than for the rank and file.

2. No Party can conceal for long its weakness in the constituencies. Labour, therefore, should look to its armour. An army unprepared cannot win in the field and it must lose in the diplomatic field also. This has been the burthen of our song for long enough. A big national and countryside effort to strengthen our forces is vitally necessary.

3. We want no sudden issues, no one-day conferences to decide our fate, no long Parliaments again, but very short ones. Above all, no dictatorship from any quarter, and a free Democracy both in and out of the House.

And our ideals should be our guiding light in issues that are to come—neither that of Party or of persons coming foremost to this.

# Training Candidates

## —GLASGOW SETS AN EXAMPLE

Glasgow City Labour Party has developed a new form of Party activity which is of more than local interest, and which has achieved immediate success.

This is the establishment of a Training Course for future Labour candidates. The first session consists of a series of 16 lectures. Twelve of these are on Local Government Practice and are led by experienced local administrators, generally the Convener (Chairman) of the Council Committee concerned.

One department of Local Government service is taken as the subject of each lecture and after the lecturer has explained the methods and operations of the Department questions and discussion are allowed. The Departments covered include Transport, Education, Finance, Housing, Health, Welfare (Public Assistance), Parks, etc.

Every fourth lecture is on Theory, and deals with the general structure of Scottish Local Government, the powers and functions of the various types of Local Authorities and their relations with central government and State Departments. These lectures are taken in co-operation with the Labour College.

At the end of this series an examination will be set and certificates issued to successful pupils.

At the second session the Council Departments not covered by the first series of lectures will be dealt with, together with a series of talks on Group Standing Orders, Group procedure and the general structure of the Labour Party and its record in Local Government.

A Panel of Municipal Candidates is drawn up with considerable care by the Glasgow City Labour Party and is

subject to annual review. Affiliated and Party organisations are invited to submit nominees for the Panel. All such nominees are sent a questionnaire, the completion of which is a condition of inclusion in the Panel. The questionnaire requires the nominee to state the D.L.P. in which he holds a membership card and the length of Party membership. The number of meetings attended during the preceding year of both the D.L.P. and Ward Committee has also to be stated, together with a list of any offices held in the Labour Party, Trade Union or Co-operative Movement. The nominee has further to state his or her reasons for wishing to become a member of the Council and to undertake to abide by Standing Orders and continue to attend Group and Party meetings regularly.

The list of nominees who complete this questionnaire satisfactorily is "vetted" by the Executive Committee and, minus any deletions made by that body, is submitted to the General Committee for endorsement.

In the event of a casual vacancy arising on the Council only persons on this Panel may be nominated for selection at a conference consisting of the Executive Committees of the City Labour Party and the constituency Labour Party covering the division which includes the Ward in which the vacancy occurs. A representative of the Labour Group also attends such Selection Conferences with full voting powers.

The procedure in thus drafting a Panel may seem unduly strict and forbidding to many Labour Parties, but there is a special reason for it in Glasgow. Two years ago, in this city, there was a series of trials in which some members of the Council were convicted for corruption. All Parties represented on the Council were involved, and the Labour Party heaviest of all. The local Labour Movement was re-organised shortly afterwards and determined to make every possible effort to prevent a recurrence of such episodes. Hence the Panel and the Training Course for members thereof. Despite the rigidity of the procedure, 54 persons were approved for the Panel.

Members of the Panel may attend the Course of Lectures free. Other interested members of the Party, including, of course, future aspirants for the Panel, may attend on payment of a nominal fee of 6d. per lecture. A

register is strictly kept and Panel members are expected to attend regularly or must provide a reasonable excuse for absence.

There is a probability that when local elections are resumed after the war present members of Councils will retire *en bloc* and local "general elections" will be held. If so, a very large number of Labour candidates will be required quickly. Glasgow, which will require 114 in such circumstances, means to be ready with a reservoir of trained candidates who have made a serious endeavour to fit themselves for the responsibilities of public office.

The scheme might with profit be examined by other Labour Parties, especially those in the larger municipalities.

#### ADDITIONAL CANDIDATURES

FORFARS.: Dundee.—Mr. Wm. Quinn, 25, Alderman Place, Glasgow, W.3. (N.U.G. & M.W.).  
Dundee.—Mr. John Strachey, 39, St. Leonard's Terrace, London, S.W.3. (D.L.P.).

#### CANDIDATURES WITHDRAWN

CAMBS.: Cambridge.—Dr. Alex Wood.  
LANCS.: Oldham.—Mr. David A. Mainds.  
LANARKS.: Rutherglen.—Mr. Tom Scollen.

## LET THE BLACKFRIARS PRESS HELP YOU !

Printers of this Journal.  
Let us help you in your work by producing your literature in good and tasteful style at reasonable prices, and with quick despatch. Send us your enquiries.

**THE BLACKFRIARS PRESS**  
Phone 27813 LIMITED  
Smith-Dorrien Road, Leicester



## FILM PROPAGANDA

We note that the offer of the Workers Film Association Ltd. to supply a programme of social films dealing with various aspects of problems with which the Beveridge Report deals, for the inclusive sum of £5 10s. od. has received prompt and widespread acceptance. The list of features last listed was also a great success and no less than 143 bookings resulted.

The W.F.A. still have open a few weeks which may be booked up at the special rate of £30 for a week of film shows. Organisations can help the W.F.A. and themselves by holding a series of film shows over one week at the rate of £5 per day inclusive. A suitable programme will be submitted on application.

This year's Chairman of the W.F.A. is Tom O'Brien, the well-known Secretary of the National Association of the Kine and Theatrical Employees. Mr. O'Brien represents the General Council of the Trade Union Congress and his close association with the film industry should be of incalculable value to the Association. George Ridley, M.P., was the Chairman in 1942.

The Education Committee of the Grays Co-operative Society has consistently used films for education and propaganda. They possess a first-class cine projection outfit and, during the war period, they have arranged each year a comprehensive programme of film exhibitions.

Recently they projected an interesting experiment in the use of films for providing education and entertainment for their successful Youth Clubs. Youth Clubs will be shown a copy of Cavalcanti's famous historical film entitled "Film and Reality." The members will then be invited to submit essays on this epic essay. The committee has appointed Alderman Joseph Reeves as adjudicator.

This scheme coincides with a proposal made by the Workers Film Association that as a means of obtaining the interest of members of Youth Clubs, film shows might be organised. The W.F.A. offer programmes of specially-selected films for young people for the flat rate of £5 10s. od. in any part of the country, the offer including the provision of films, mobile projection outfit and the services of an operator.

## PROPAGANDA BY PRINT

We quoted last month the Socialist Clarity Group as saying *inter alia* that Labour wanted a policy in relation to the Colonies.

In "The Colonies: Labour's Post-war Policy for the African and Pacific Colonies" [price 3d., post free 4d.—The Labour Party] just published we get, in the form of a Policy Report, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions, which have been approved for publication by the N.E.C. This should satisfy the critics on this point.

We have looked in vain in the pamphlet for some reference to the Atlantic Charter, the ambiguities and platitudes of which were once so mistakenly applauded in our ranks. But Liberal politicians can always frame vain and frothy phrases, that sound well and mean little; the authors indeed appear to have attached more importance to the blunt, and at any rate understandable dictum of "what we've got we hold!" Whether we are all agreed on that point is another matter.

Anyway, Britain's plunder is a legacy for Labour if we win power, and the colonies cannot be dismissed from our problems, and indeed may become one of the biggest of them.

Hence this well-thought out policy or programme. We do not accept all the suggestions, for there is a better way than capitalist loans to colonies. But the pamphlet does give clear insight into urgent problems, and its solutions will almost all be approved by Labour people.

But if this is one of our urgent and biggest after-war problems it becomes necessary for Labour people to understand it, and the general direction, too, in which reforms are to be sought. As 50 copies of the pamphlet can be got for 10s. every Party should be informed. Further, the whole question is an entertaining one for lectures and discussion.

\* \* \*

Three new leaflets by the Party deal with the Communists and their application for affiliation. That may look like overdoing it. But when one remembers Communist methods, and wealth, it seems desirable to get this thing right, and once for all. Com-

(Continued on Page 9.)

## ★ A BRIGHT SPOT FULHAM YOUTH SETS A FINE EXAMPLE

When someone says "it can't be done," or that it's no use trying in wartime to build an organisation, our readers may, after perusing this article, say, "Well, look at Fulham!"

In this case we mean Fulham Youth; surely in these times the most difficult section of the community to get together and forge into a virile movement.

We had intended a "write-up" of Fulham Youth Section this month. But instead we have received the report of the March quarter and this so admirably covers the field of work, and indicates the methods adopted, that we propose to reprint same in full, with only trivial condensation. We congratulate our friends on their excellent work, and particularly the secretary, Arthur Clare. We see in this movement the spirit which animated the pioneers, and which renews faith and hope in maturer minds. If one branch can do these things, are there not many other places where such work is possible?

The magazine "Youth," mentioned in the report, has reached its sixth issue. It is a lively and instructive paper of great promise. Harold Laski contributes an article this month.

The report reads:

In the past quarter we have maintained our membership and have built up our financial position. We have organised educational classes which are now running regularly. First aid every Monday, and Chairmanship and Public Speaking every Wednesday. This is run under the auspices of the National Council of Labour Colleges. With our branch meetings every Tuesday, this makes a total of three nights a week regular meetings, in addition Thursday Party Ward meetings are attended in different wards; Friday we have our socials every third week, and Saturday we go regularly to the local theatre or cinema.

In February we met on twenty evenings out of twenty-eight, and with the lighter days and better weather coming we will be out each Sunday on rambles, hikes, and cycle runs, and will most likely be meeting every day of the month.

We held our annual meeting on the 2nd March and new officers were elected. The Branch resolved to organise a membership campaign and the committee has formulated plans for this. It is to take the form of a "Youth Week" and it is aimed at getting 100 new members. Socials, etc., will be organised.

We are circularising every member of the Party, appealing to them to introduce every young person in their street, to the League. This is being done by our visiting each Party member in turn [we understand that 700 adult members have already been visited, resulting in many contacts with young people.—Ed. "L.O."], supplying them with literature, entrance forms and free tickets for a social and dance, to be held on the 29th March. Dr. Edith Summerskill, M.P., our Member of Parliament, is to address this. We have drafted a programme for the week, as follows:—

Monday: A grand social and dance. Admission free. Band. Refreshments.

Tuesday: An organised debate. Subject: Is there a place for religion in the post-war world?

Wednesday: Brains Trust.

Thursday: A Labour Youth Rally. Speakers: Dr. Edith Summerskill, M.P., Councillor F. Banfield, and two youth speakers.

Friday: Grand concert and social. L.O.Y. talent let loose.

Saturday: Theatre party.

Sunday: Hike to Buckinghamshire.

We have approached several T.U. Branches for support and the Labour Party have agreed to donate up to £5 to meet expenses. Our magazine will be a "Special Youth Week Number," and we hope to achieve results of upwards of 100 members. We are aiming high, but—something attempted, something achieved.

We arranged a visit to our local Library (one of the best in London) and were shown over by the Borough Librarian.

We have attended conferences organised by the L.P. on Beveridge Report and Party Organisation and Electoral Machinery. Two of our members have been elected from the Party as delegates to the London Labour Party Annual Conference, and one member is standing for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Party in West Fulham.



We now have five representatives on the General Management Committee of the Party, two from the League and three as delegates from the Wards.

Our branch library is in full swing and we have received three dozen volumes of political books from D. H. Daines, the London Labour Party Secretary, and two dozen from Mr. A. C. Powell, our Party Secretary.

Our magazine is still going strong and the demand for it is increasing. One of our articles in our "Youth" has been reproduced in the "London News."

We continue to organise our three-weekly socials and at the last one, held on 12th March, we made £1 1s. 6d. profit. Attendance was approximately 60 young people.

In submitting this report I would like to sincerely thank the National Agent's Dept. of the Labour Party for all the assistance and encouragement they have given us during our short life, and we hope to repay this gratitude by making the West Fulham League of Youth, one which the Party can be justly proud of.

## HINT ON WARTIME MEETINGS

Bearing in mind the inexperience of many Labour secretaries in publicity methods, and the need, too, for others to bring their ideas up-to-date, the issue by the Labour Party through its propaganda officer, Mr. John Pinkerton, of a two-page foolscap series of hints in arranging meetings, appears a useful and necessary piece of work.

One cannot too often point out that tried methods sometimes stale and new methods become advisable, and it is a striking fact that several necessary items in the organisation of a successful and productive meeting are again and again omitted.

The circular, of which a copy can presumably be obtained by interested persons, emphasises points which the "L.O." has advocated, such as the use of personal invitations, the appeal for membership *during* a meeting; the value and driving power of music, the provision and capable selling and display of literature, the bold appeal for funds, the importance of press reports and adequate arrangements for and with the speaker, both for his convenience and to avoid a *faux pas*.

The circular add new points: such as the offer of the Party to supply biographical notes concerning the speaker—invaluable for press notices and in general advertising (how we wish photo stereotypes were also supplied). The circular, too, draws attention to certain war features that must be remembered, and not least is a reminder that no restaurant cars are now available on the trains.

Another new point is that of advising Head Office of the detailed arrangements concerning the speaker; a fine insurance this is, for letters go astray, and speakers naturally do often ring up Head Office when in doubt.

A good deal of attention is given to the drafting of leaflets and posters, though it has to be remembered that there are limitations on the use of both. Several illustrations are given.

Here we would ourselves utter a word of warning against slavish copying of styles. One may be attracted to a style, but printers' types are cold facts. Newcastle-on-Tyne may make a fine balancing line in one poster, but Hull hardly makes a good replacement. Similarly with names of halls and speakers. A practised man knows how to adapt these things and may even know something of type faces, widths, depths, etc., but a novice needs his printers' help.

Here once again we advise going to a good printer. The little man rarely has the type, selection, or stocks, and what one may gain from the little printer by personal attention is lost by other considerations. The larger printer will have selections of *modern* type; his products, because he can employ the best and most experienced men, will reflect the printer's art—it will not be "arty," a trashy outworn style of 40 years ago, which so many little printers emulate. Rather, the style will *pull* in simple dignified and telling type. Beyond that the bigger printer will employ T.U. labour, and most likely not only in one department.

(Continued from Page 7.)

munist cashing in on Russia has gone far enough. And there's such a difference, too, between the golden calf and its worshippers — and exploiters!

The three leaflets are supplied in adequate quantities to D.L.P.s and

(See also foot of Page 12.)

# Local Party Reports and Balance Sheets

We may be permitted one or two general observations on the annual reports from Labour Parties which have been sent to us this year. Some reports reach us without a financial statement; in other cases we have received financial statements but no report of activities. It is, of course, impossible to speak altogether with certainty in such cases.

We would again draw the attention of D.L.P.s to the desirability of including reports and cash summaries concerning their local units. Very few D.L.P.s do this yet, and in most cases the absence of such matters gives an insufficient picture of Labour doings in the constituency. This year we note a lack of uniformity in dealing with such items as "Aid to Russia Funds." Most Parties include these items, but in some cases we imagine the item has been regarded as outside Party finances.

It is noteworthy, too, how many secretaries take a pride in enumerating the total of years they have presented reports. This is justifiable; indeed, we discussed with Party officers some time ago means for securing, and even rewarding, continuity among Party secretaries. There is a charm about long service, and experience is an asset in our Movement.

The first annual report of the Yorkshire Regional Council, covering the first eight months of its existence, is a worthy document and affords full justification for its establishment. Almost one-sixth of Labour's Parliamentary representation comes from this area, and the report, therefore, reflects the pulsing of a powerful Movement, for the first time regionally combined for mutual strength and greater triumphs. Affiliations total nearly 300,000, producing £379 out of a total income of £835, out of which £51 has been saved. The Council appears during its existence to have got down to brass tacks on all the several matters within its sphere, and the activities are surprisingly numerous. There appears to be a wealth of capable man and woman-power in the area, and this, harnessed

to a new and modern organising machine, Labour in Yorkshire, come what may, will not fail in the testing hour.

Woolwich L.P.'s report, presented to the 40th annual meeting of the Party on April 3rd, is, as usual, something for the whole Party to be proud of—yes, and to quote at our enemies. Solid individual membership is the distinguishing feature of Woolwich L.P., though it also has affiliations producing £700. I.M. produced an income of £493 6s. 7d. from 3,119 members, which is a slight advance on last year. Membership is consolidated and lapses eliminated each year. How solid is the core is shown by the fact that only 173 members were lost from all causes. The Party's total income was, roughly, £2,000, of which £157 represented contributions to the William Barefoot Memorial Fund.

Derby Labour Party's report, always cyclopædic in the local information it contains, is one of the rare ones to include the accounts of its ward organisations. But by doing so credit and encouragement is given to those deserving same and the reader gets, too, a truer picture of Party life and energies. Derby's affiliated membership is 14,961, an increase of 2,067; individual membership is 1,142, which just tops last year's figure. The accounts are presented with bookkeeping precision and indicate a healthy and well-conducted Party.

Newport Labour Party has increased its membership and bagged £193 from this source. Donations from wards, sections, etc., brought in £275, and sundry activities brought the total income to over £800, out of which funds in hand were increased by £100. All ten wards are now functioning together with eleven women's sections. That the wards and sections could contribute so satisfactorily to central funds is an indication of widely distributed strength and power.



Rotherham L.P. and T.C. presents us with one of the best printed and got up reports we have seen. It is of 92 pp. and cover, printed on art paper with nearly forty half-tone photos of local stalwarts and officers. The book is a compendium of local Labour information and activity, and has been carefully compiled. Over 30 advertisements speak of pushful enterprise and should go far to defray the cost. We note an Election Fund of £157 and a saving of £30 out of last year's income. The report, unusually presented as to Party doings under each month's heading, shows a year of increased activity.

Bedford D.L.P. had a remarkably good financial year, thanks to a determination to be happy even in war-time—for £402 came in as profit from dances. The saving on the year amounted to £260 and £300 of the balance of £442 was voted to the General Election Fund. The latter now stand at £460. There is also a Building Fund of £36. This Party, anyway, seems prepared for a fight.

Hendon constituency L.P., which has added to its Election Fund about £120 out of last year's savings (the fund now stands at £370), appears anticipatory of a Redistribution Measure which will divide that great constituency into two; though, for general reasons, we hope, and expect, that measure of justice will be deferred until a full and adequate measure of Redistribution becomes possible. Hendon is a well-conducted Party covering three great L.G. areas. The report stresses the vital need of rebuilding membership, which stands at just over 1,000, and also lays emphasis on the need of a strong and virile Party at the end of the war. The last Christmas Bazaar was a record and (including a draw) returned a profit of £142.

Hendon L.L.P. is a subsidiary of the above-named Party and our general comment as to efficiency equally applies. There was a saving of £29 on the year, bringing cash balance to £53 odd, and there is, further, a Local Election Fund of £50. Members' subscriptions and cash payments totalled £72. An unusual feature of the report is the inclusion of a report from the Labour Group. Few Parties give this, and it is an idea to be recommended.

Cambridge T.C. and L.P. presents a healthy statement of accounts. The St. Matthew's Ward, in particular, did well and raised over £126 from dances, of which £125 was donated to the Party's Hall Account. As to the latter, over £300 was paid off mortgage and on that account alone there is an excess of assets amounting to nearly £800, apart from £200 odd held in balance. The Election Account reaches £189. We note a useful year of work and that this Party and its personnel are of account in this University city.

We shall turn now from the work of powerful parties to review a report from an altogether different type of Division along the west coast of Wales. Here in Cardiganshire a septuagenarian wonder man, Mr. A. T. Grindley, keeps his scattered Party together, collecting from all sorts of out-of-the-way hamlets, and does the job by means of a meagre service of buses plus a lot of "shanks's pony"! The Party increased its membership from 406 to 434 last year and to accomplish this Mr. Grindley actually *walked* 861 miles and travelled 1,430 miles by bus or train, putting in an average of 31 hours per week. The Party is paid up to Head Office and has increased its Election Fund by £46. The fund now stands at £112 15s. 6d. Space presses this month, but we shall quote from this report in next issue. Meanwhile, who says the pioneers are a race that are no more?

Kettering Division, of whose annual meeting we have seen a newspaper report, now has every T.U. branch, except a few quite small ones, affiliated to the Party. The total exceeds 7,000. The financial position, too, is satisfactory. Extensive propaganda has been accomplished during the year by means of meetings and propaganda. No less than 20 national speakers have assisted. The Party is exceptionally well off for local leaders of ability.

We have also seen a newspaper report of the annual meeting of the Newton (Lancs) Division. Here a number of Labour Clubs assist in the Party's work. There is again an increase of membership and the Advice Bureau has worked at top pressure. The report itself is good propaganda and its verbatim report in the local newspaper must have been a good advert.

Portsmouth can be no happy place to organise at present. We have only the Central Party's accounts to hand, yet this necessarily attenuated picture of Party activities shows that financially the Party more than held its own. Funds increased by £90. An interesting and instructive feature for other Parties is the success of the Maintenance Fund, out of which over £128 was paid last year to public representatives. We note that the exhibition mentioned in the "L.O." for August last (No. 248) yielded a profit to this fund of £61.

Hartlepool's D.L.P. has in some unwelcome respects similar circumstances to Portsmouth, yet the report tells us that the Party position in the two Hartlepool is sound. Membership was not only held but slightly increased and now totals 601. The League of Youth Branch does well and its weekly meetings have an average attendance of about 40. There are 90 L. of Y. members. The Party has just lost a valuable secretary in Mr. J. C. Proud, and we send our good wishes both to him and his successor.

The mention of Bermondsey recalls, perhaps, the worst fate of all. And to-day the Party rises like Phoenix, literally from the ashes. Membership has now been stabilised and the Party pays it way. The work of general rebuilding is shown by the fact that 38 organisations are affiliated and the Management Committee meet regularly with an attendance of about 30. As people return to the repaired property they are canvassed, and so this once great Party fights its way back to the renown it held for so many years. The Women's Section is a bright spot, but, as if this Party hadn't suffered enough, the death of Mrs. Ada Salter on December 4th was a further blow, both to the Party and to that gallant great man, too, Dr. Salter. No words of ours will suffice here.

[Several other reviews are held over till next month.]

*(Concluded from page 9.)*

L.L.P.s on application. Send in now.

As we are in the press we have received a copy of a further pamphlet, "The Communist Party and the War—a Record of Hypocrisy and Treachery to the Workers of Europe." Price 2d.

## REGIONALISM

*(Concluded from last month.)*

Coun. Deacon does not leave the matter there, but he formulates a brief (and admittedly incomplete) list of Local Government matters that need attention and reform. And may we add that if Labour devoted itself to some of these questions, it would serve a far more useful purpose than tinkering with the structure of Local Government in the old-fashioned Liberal reformist way. We again quote:—

"There is plenty of scope for reform of the present Local Government machinery and operation without wholesale scrapping with very doubtful alternatives and murdering what little democratic content exists.

Some of the minor matters might include:—

- (a) Abolition of the aldermanic system.
- (b) Rectification of boundaries, especially where these overlap with Parliamentary divisions.
- (c) Consider uniformity in dates of elections as between Boroughs and Rural District Councils, etc.
- (d) Consider whether it is better to have a general election every three years or the annual retiring principle.
- (e) Standard of recruitment and conditions of service of officers.

Some of the larger matters would include:—

- (a) Greater use of the power of co-option on committee.
- (b) Enabling Bills to allow progressive councils to exercise initiative.
- (c) Greater co-operation between adjacent authorities.
- (d) Expedite the process of the review of districts provided by Section 4 of the 1929 Act. Possibly place the initiative out of the control of the county councils.
- (e) Ministry of Health or Planning to review the allocation between authorities of the whole of the functions of different types of authorities and consider anomalies of authorities being either too small or too large.
- (f) Adult suffrage for Local Government instead of property qualification.
- (g) National system of valuation and assessment.

*(Continued on Page 14.)*



*"Honour them while ye may"*

## GEORGE RICHARDSON (OF HENDON)

The Hendon Constituency Labour Party (Hendon and parts of Harrow and Wembley) passed a milestone and spent one of the happiest evenings in their history on March 6th, when they rallied, some 200 strong, to celebrate the 60th birthday of Alderman George R. Richardson, their hon. secretary, and the rock on which has been founded most of the Labour, Trade Union and Co-op. endeavour in the district since 1909, 34 years of unbroken service including pioneering into existence the Hendon Co-op. Education Committee, the Hendon I.L.P., the Hendon Trades Council, the Hendon Constituency and L.L.P.s, plus acting as a member of the Strike Committee in 1926, an activity which the L.M.S., whom he served as Traffic Controller, rewarded with quite a long period of suspension.

Such is George Richardson's lack of interest in himself that it had been judged prudent to conceal from him all knowledge of the Birthday Party (complete with Present!) which his comrades planned to hold. Conspiratorial meetings, the circulation of secret documents to friends and organisations, and various underground movements provided rich fun for Party members, while the victim went his innocent, devoted, nose-to-grindstone way, until at the camouflaged "social," to which his family had lured him, the entry of the Mayor of Hendon with the Lady Mayoress and the Director of Education, tore it!

It was only by some cat-out-of-the-bag work that His Worship had heard of what was to have been a purely Labour Party event, but, having heard, he insisted on being allowed to share the opportunity of honouring his colleague (George Richardson is Leader of the Labour Group on the Hendon Borough Council, Chairman of the Education Committee and member of the Hendon Food Control and A.R.P. Committees). The Mayor's friendly gesture and appreciative words and those of the Director of Education were warmly received, the latter stating that the children of Hendon owed much to George Richardson, and testifying to his fundamental,

pioneering faith in the value of education—a zealous faith, it may be added, which Hendon citizens gratefully observe also in their director, Mr. E. J. Cuthbertson.

When Charles Latham, after a brilliantly amusing speech on a subject literally dear to his heart had presented a really jolly cheque, warm tributes were paid to their old friend by Charles Robertson, Chairman L.C.C. Education Committee and Fred. C. Woods, General Secretary, Clerical and Administrative Workers' Union. Then came an avalanche of messages read by Parliamentary candidate, Councillor W. O. Allen (Harrow U.D.C.) and including greetings from C. R. Attlee, Jim Middleton (on behalf of the N.E.C. of the Labour Party), G. R. Shepherd, H. Drinkwater, J. P. M. Millar (N.C.L.C.), H. C. Charlton, M.P., Mr. and Mrs. Blanco White, Mr. and Mrs. G. D. H. Cole, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Postgate and George Ridley, M.P.

George Richardson needed all his courage to bear this unexpected demonstration of friendship which, as he remarked, seem very surprising since he had always regarded his work for the public and for the Party as "just a job to be done," adding characteristically that now that he knew what was expected of him he would spur himself on to do better!

Refreshments having been produced miraculously, as usual, by the women of the Guilds and Sections, the joyous celebration ended with the singing of Auld Lang Syne and the Red Flag . . . And now to-morrow! . . . George Richardson having retired from his position on the L.M.S., the citizens of Hendon and his comrades of the Labour Movement, now command all his time, all his ability, all his devotion, all his zestful inspiration, and heartily wish him many years of happiness and health, cheered on his way, we hope, by the assurance of "gratitude, admiration and affection" given to him in such full measure as the adventure of greater freedom for service looms before him.

Fine, indeed, it is to know, as Jim Middleton said in his letter, that "recognition has been expressed while our comrade is still keen and active among us," and that we, his friends and comrades have obeyed the injunction: "Love your friend and tell him so sometimes."

(Continued from Page 12.)

- (h) Consider the position of Part III Educational Authorities.

The reader will add other points to this short list of examples.

\* \* \*

We regret that we must hold over our review of Ald. J. W. Foster's suggestions in his pamphlet "The Future of Local Government."

\* \* \*

While in the press we have received a copy of the Labour Party Committee's Report. We reserve our comment till next issue.

## Electoral Machinery

(Continued from last month.)

23. We appreciate that this duplication of electoral machinery would be a disadvantage; and we have sought for a means of avoiding it. Were it possible to find a system comprising both forms of machinery which could either produce a better Parliamentary register than that produced by the scheme set forth in Appendix A, or which, other things being equal, could reduce the administrative burden of duplicate machinery, it would, of course, be entitled to preference.

27. We cannot, therefore, improve upon the conclusions stated in paragraph 22 above, that, to meet the expected conditions of post-war population movement consistently with the present local government franchise, there will be needed both the continuous machinery described in Appendix A for Parliamentary purposes and the present periodical canvass machinery for the purposes of local government registration. Both electorates could, as at present, be included in a single register. We feel bound to recommend accordingly, and to draw attention to the obstacles presented by the diversity of franchises to any improved method of registration which could supersede the present machinery for both Parliamentary and local government purposes, either for the exceptional conditions of the post-war period or for permanent adoption. If the complete assimilation of the local government franchise to the Parliamentary franchise comes under favourable review by the Government and Parliament, these difficulties will, of course, disappear.

28. Features of the Continuous Registration Scheme in Appendix A.—Subject to the foregoing observations we refer in the following paragraphs to certain features of the continuous scheme in Appendix A.

29. The scheme contemplates a residence qualification of two months' duration. We recommend this reduced period as an additional safeguard against disfranchisements owing to short-term movements under the exceptional conditions expected.

30. As regards the civilian electorate qualified by residence, the scheme consists wholly of the supply through the National Register to Electoral Registration Officers of information which is already available, with the exception only of the special provision to ensure that an elector is not removed from one register until he is included in the register of some other constituency (see Appendix A, paras. 10-12).

31. The scheme does not allow for more than one residence qualification. That is to say, an elector would not have a choice between two residences. The automatic machinery is incompatible with any other basis.

32. It will be seen that registration of business premises in the scheme appended is based upon claims by qualified persons. In view of the small number of persons affected by this franchise we do not think that this proposal should give rise to any difficulty.

33. Subject to the initial disadvantages to which new machinery would naturally be subject if called upon to function during its earliest stages, the scheme appended should enable the printed electoral register to be published within four or five weeks after notice of an election, and six or seven weeks after the date to which the qualifying conditions relate, on any occasion when the need for an election arises. . . .

\* \* \*

We now come to the actual machinery for carrying out the committee's suggestions on a continuous system. These are found in Appendix A of the Report. We have omitted the very technical paragraphs dealing with the maintenance of the register and arrangements for the Armed Forces so as to confine ourselves to matters of general interest. Labour Registration practitioners will, of course, have possessed themselves of the Report.



N.B.—In this Appendix “N.R.” and “N.R.O.” mean “National Registration Officer,” “E.R.” and “E.R.O.” mean “Electoral Registration” and “Electoral Registration Officer.”

*Civilians: Initial Construction.*

1. In a system of registers to be maintained from the N.R. records it is extremely important that those registers should originate in close correspondence with the latter. The Committee understand that for the initial compilation of the electoral register, it should be possible on one of certain future occasions for a series of records for each area which would satisfy this requirement to be released either temporarily or wholly to the E.R.O. These records could be supplied for residents in the area of 19 years of age or over. They would be dealt with by the E.R.O. in the following manner.

2. The records of persons of full adult age (other than aliens), or cards prepared from them, would be used by the E.R.O. in constructing the initial Electors List A. A qualifying period would not be required of the resident electors included in that List. The List would be open to claims and objections for a period in respect of other qualifying conditions.

3. The records of persons between 19 and 21 years of age, or cards prepared from them, would be transmitted by the E.R.O. to the Central N.R. Office (see para. 14).

4. Particulars of persons claiming the Business Premises qualification could not be obtained by this means. It would be necessary for claims to be made independently by qualified persons; and notice would need to be given that claims should be made on a form obtainable from specified sources.

22. *Business Premises.*—Under the head of “Construction” it is proposed that particulars of Business Premises qualification should be obtained by claim. Maintenance will, however, be requisite. Here the N.R. system can provide no automatic machinery. The onus of revising these qualifications cannot be left with the E.R.O., and the initial and subsequent qualifications must be for a year, renewable by application. To facilitate such applications the E.R.O. should send an application form to each elector already possessing the Business Premises qualification in order that he may apply for a renewal if qualified. Fail-

ing renewal on a fresh application the previous application would lapse at the end of the year. At the appropriate season of the year the E.R.O. should give publicity to the need for claims being made by persons newly qualified.

23.—*Procedure for Election.*—The procedure of maintenance would be continued indefinitely, so far as relates to Parliamentary purposes, until notice of an election is given. On a date determined by the date of the Royal Proclamation the register will be “frozen.” Qualifications would be determined by the position on a statutory “freezing” date X (say 14) days before the Royal Proclamation. Notices of removals, etc., would continue to be received and dealt with; but no further Electors Lists would be published until after the election.

24. The electoral register representing the qualified electorates of constituencies on the statutory “freezing” date must forthwith be printed for use by party agents and for polling purposes.

26. The Committee are advised that the continuous system of printing is the best for the purpose and that, under arrangements taking account of the difficult conditions expected, 4 weeks should suffice for the composition of final additions, deletions and making up and printing. Under such conditions a period of 4 weeks is shorter than might have been expected. Allowing 4 or 5 weeks from the date of the Royal Proclamation or Writ and antedating the statutory “freezing” date by 2 weeks, the printed register should be available within 5 weeks from the Royal Proclamation or Writ and within 6 to 7 weeks from the statutory “freezing” date to which the registered qualifications relate.

27. For Parliamentary election purposes it would not be necessary to print the register unless and until required for an election.

[*Special Note:* Mr. Churchill's statement that it is hoped (Before Easter) to make an announcement in the House of Commons regarding the Government's legislative intentions may, of course, alter the character of next month's article. If legislation is imminent, we may be able to deal with same; we shall be surprised, however, if the Government sticks strictly to the Report. In some respects we should think it likely to go further.—Ed. “L.O.”]

# **The Labour Party PUBLICATIONS LIST**

## **"NEVER AGAIN!"**

By Arthur Greenwood, M.P.

Price post free, 1 copy 2d.; 10 copies 9d.; 100 copies 7/-.

Mr. Greenwood's speech in the House of Commons on Post-War Reconstruction. It displays the wide knowledge he has of the problems of the future and of the methods of approach to their solution, and is a most useful contribution to discussion on this subject.

## **"SPEARHEAD OF HUMANITY"**

By Herbert Morrison, M.P.

This pamphlet contains five recent speeches by Mr. Morrison on Britain's War Effort, Labour and the Future, and the Foundations of the Future. The facts that Mr. Morrison gives of Britain's war effort and the workers' enormous contribution to it should be more widely known.

## **"INDIA : WHAT NOW AND WHAT NEXT ?"**

By George Ridley, M.P.

The object of this pamphlet, as the author says, "is to present the ordinary man and woman with an outline of the Indian problem, as objective and factual as possible." The pamphlet deals first with the position in India after the 1935 Act, and then very fully with the White Paper proposals which Sir Stafford Cripps took to India, and with Labour's policy, of which the proposals are in a great measure the expression.

## **"LABOUR ON THE MARCH"**

By George Ridley, M.P.

This pamphlet is a "flashback" to the early days of Labour in Parliament and the struggle, begun then, and continued to the present day, for social security. It is a human story with a special appeal for the generation of to-day with its new horizons.

## **"LABOUR'S FIGHT FOR THE OLD FOLK"**

This pamphlet, which carries a foreword by Arthur Greenwood, M.P., is a factual account of the consistent fight put up by the Parliamentary Party, from their formation in 1906 to the present day, on behalf of the aged.

The prices for each of the above four pamphlets are as follow:—

Post free: 1 copy, 3d.; 12 copies, 1/6; 100 copies, 12/-.

All the above obtainable from:—

**THE LABOUR PARTY  
PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT  
TRANSPORT HOUSE, SMITH SQUARE  
LONDON, S.W.1**